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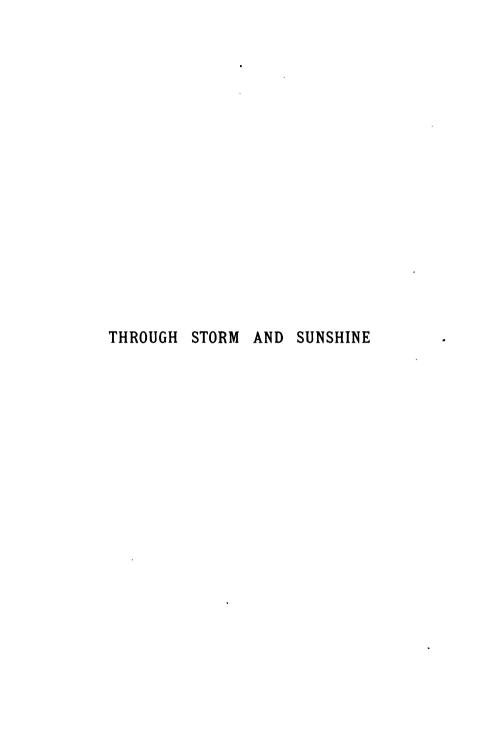
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THROUGH STORM
AND SUNSHINE





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"The door is opened, and the twain Are in each other s arms again."

THROUGH STORM AND SUNSHINE

BY

ADON

AUTHOR OF 'LAYS OF MODERN OXFORD

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. PATERSON, M. E. EDWARDS,
A. T., AND THE AUTHOR



HENRY S. KING & CO.

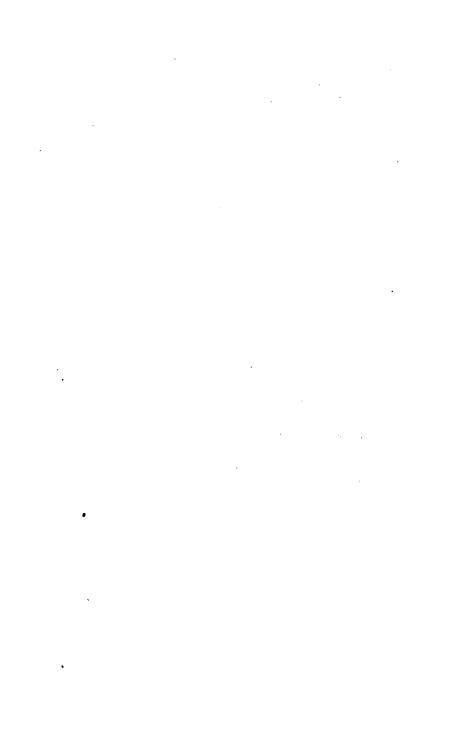
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IN MEMORIAM.

WE watched our darling pass away

From this sad world to one of rest,

With anxious hearts and voice suppress'd

All through the long and weary day.

Her silken tresses' dark delight
Hung loose around her marble brow,
And those blue eyes shone dimly now
That twinkled once like stars of night.

Her pale lips gently moved in prayer,
Her kind eyes smiled on all around,
For those she loved, in grief profound,
Were kneeling all with bent heads there.

More feebly came her failing breath;
A smile upon her wan lips played,
Her dying lips that meekly prayed
Till she grew beautiful in death.

Call it not death; it is but sleep,
A sleep whose waking shall be joy;
All Heaven, free from earth's alloy,
Where eyes shall not know how to weep.

Why should our hearts be torn with pain?

Can this from death our darling save?

Can grief recall her from the grave?

Or weeping bring her back again?

Nay, rather let us put our trust
In Him who gives and takes away;
We are but creatures of a day,
And God is merciful and just.

He clotheth the bright flowers that fade;
He watcheth o'er the birds that fly;
And shall He doom unblest to die
Mankind in His own image made?

Ah! no; ah! no; for God is love,
And wondrous are His hidden ways;
To some He giveth length of days,
And some He taketh up above

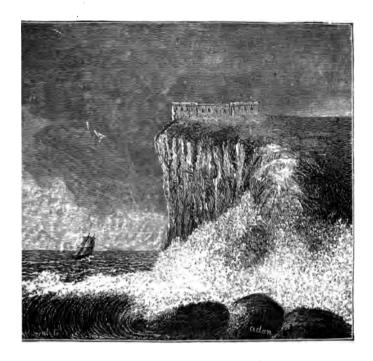
Before bright childhood's days have fled,
To meet perchance in that pure rest
Some kindred spirit of the blest
That we on earth have wept as dead.

STRONG AS DEATH.

PART I.

UPON an island's rock-bound shore
The snowy-crested breakers roar,
Tossing their wrath-clad heads on high
In proud defiance to the sky,
While mournful rings the sea-bird's screech
From craggy height and pebbly beach,
Where the bleak headland steep and grey
Stands jutting out and guards the bay,
On whose dark boulders roars the sea
Like the thunder of artillery.

Upon the headland's steepest rock, Secure from storm and tempest shock, There stands a castle looking o'er The ocean, whose incessant roar Re-echoes from the cliffs below Whene'er the swift, dark storm winds blow.



But in that castle's highest tower There sits a maid, and many an hour, By moonlit night and sunny day, She thinks of some one far away: The sweet expression of her face An angel's countenance would grace; Her well-formed shoulders moulded rare Are hidden half by golden hair, That flows in rippling tresses down Her neat and closely-fitting gown: Her eyes of blue are soft and bright; Her graceful figure tall and slight, With snowy forehead, ample brow, And fair cheeks tinged with healthy glow Like the first peep of early day When morning chases night away; She seems a being from above. A thing to look at and to love. And often from her lattice high, She gazes long with anxious eye Upon those rolling waves of white, * That glimmer in the tawny light Of dark December's feeble sun, As they hiss landward one by one.

But see! what is it makes her start, With twinkling eye and beating heart, And clasp her hands in joyful glee
As she gazes on the white-waved sea?
There comes in sight a vessel gay
Which she has watched for many a day;
With tapering mast and snow-white sail,
Flying before the southern gale;
Well built for speed as ship should be
That bears a lover o'er the sea.

The maiden down to the beach has gone,
And stands on the wave-beat shore alone;
She sees the ship swing round to the gale,
She sees the sailors furl each sail,
She sees a boat let down from her side,
She sees it through the waters glide,
And it comes towards her through clouds of spray,
Dashing the angry waves away;
And now the maiden's heart beats high,
Warm is her cheek and bright her eye,
For well she knows the arm of might
That urges on its welcome flight,
And the hand that grasps that bending oar
Had oft been pressed in hers of yore.

Fast through the parting billows flew
The boat with steady strokes and true;
The oars flash gaily in the sun,
And half its course is nearly done,
When snaps the treacherous oar in twain,
And downward in the seething main,
Caught broadside by a wave of fear,
Both boat and rower disappear.

And Constance stands with clasped hands,
And bosom rent with fears,
Her tresses streaming in the wind,
Her blue eyes wet with tears;
With bursting throbs her sad heart beats
In the agony of love,
And she breathes a fervent silent prayer
To Him who dwells above

But Edwyn's form appears again
Above the surface of the main;
His boat is drifting far away
With upturned keel all dashed with spray.
The wild waves oft the swimmer hide,
But still he bravely stems the tide,

And strives with panting heart to reach The welcome line of distant beach, And nearer comes, and yet more near, And that loved voice he now can hear That makes him every muscle strain The wished-for spot of land to gain; Exhausted now, but close to land,

It wants but one stroke more—
The white wave drags him back again,
Then casts him on the shore.

There, at her feet, with fast-closed eyes
And pallid cheek, her loved one lies;
And what has she to live for now?
She cares not when she dies nor how;
Her bursting heart can never know
A sadder thought or greater woe
Than that which crushes love's young dream
When hope has shed its brightest beam
On all around, then in a breath
Comes disappointment linked with death.

'Oh! speak, my own one, speak to me; Thou must not die: I could not bear To live another day on earth,

And thou, my darling one, not there.

How sad I feel when other eyes
Gaze with long ardent looks in mine,
And how I hate all tender words
That come from other lips than thine.

And must we never roam again

Beneath that rock by tempest riven,

Where thy sweet words would fill my heart

With thoughts that drew my soul to Heaven?

And shall I never hear that voice

That ofttimes uttered words of love,
When only evening's silent star

Of beauty watched us from above?

Oh! why is death so stern to me?

So ruthless and so hard to move?

Is it that earth was too like Heaven

When thou wert here for me to love?'

Thus long she mourned, and to his side Crept close with blue eyes opened wide;



/ .

•

But those blue eyes with sorrow swim While she hangs trembling over him As fluttereth disconsolate
A bird around her wounded mate.
She laid his death-like head to rest
On the soft Eden of her breast,
And pressed her rosy mouth's delight
Against his cold lips wan and white,
Then madly tore in wild despair
The tresses of her sunny hair,
While tears of anguish burning hot
Fell on his cheek that heeded not
The rosy lips that tried in vain
To kiss it back to life again.

Some fishers walking by the sea
Saw Constance on her bended knee
Supporting Edwyn's drooping head,
Her loving arms around him spread;
The golden sunbeams of her hair
Unloosed were floating in the air,
Blown backward by the gale; and then
Those rough and weatherbeaten men

Lifted up Edwyn from the shore With tender care, and gently bore His deathlike form along the strand Unto a cottage near at hand, And did their best in every way To turn the hand of death away From him who seemed so like the dead; And as they watched beside his bed Came Constance with sad tearful eyes, And weeping, prayed them not to stay, For she herself would be his nurse: So they in pity went away. Long, long she knelt beside his bed, And long she prayed while kneeling there, And never to the Throne of Grace Ascended a more earnest prayer; While through the half-closed curtains came A ray of sunlight on her face, That looked with pleading eyes to Heaven, And shone with more than mortal grace.

She hears a sigh. Ah! can it be?—
Perchance the murmur of the sea
Caused her excited mind to hear
A sound like sighing on her ear;

And long she listens.—Yes, again, A deep-drawn sigh distinct and plain-A smile upon his lips there came Which softly murmured her dear name. At that glad sound her tears are dry, The love-light sparkles in her eve. And hope's bright smile returns again, Like summer's sunshine after rain. But then the thought rushed through her mind. Could he have known, or would he find, That she had kissed him as she did. And at the thought she blushing hid Her face within her hands for shame. And trembled e'en to breathe his name; Then with soft silent footsteps crept From out the room while still he slept, And bade the fisher's wife good-night, And turned her footsteps towards the height; For evening's shadows deeper grow, And homeward swiftly she must go, And mingle smiling with the gay, While her sad heart is far away, Fast throbbing betwixt hope and fear For all she holds on earth most dear.

PART II.

'Tis dawn again; the morning star Awaits the sunbeam's warm caress, Smiling in beauty from afar, Then fades in Heaven's blue loveliness. 'Tis dawn, and Constance leaves her bed Of troubled dreams, with aching head And beating heart that cannot stay Till morning deepens into day; But to the cot she hasteneth. Where rests the youth preserved from death: Upon her neck the brooch she wore That he had given her of yore, And in her hat the plumage white Of bird he'd shot far up the height Of snow-clad mountain's dizzy steep, The cradle where God's thunders sleep.

And Edwyn slumbers now no more,
But stands beside the cottage door
Himself again, not as he lay
All pale and deathlike yesterday.
Appearing through the morning haze,
The form of Constance meets his gaze;
Nor long before the door he stands,
But hastes to her with outstretched hands;
And now they roam along the shore
Where they had wandered oft before,
Until they find a snug retreat
Among the rocks, a mossy seat,
Around which stony crags arise,
Obscuring it from stranger eyes.

Athwart the eastern slope of Heaven,
Shines mid the clouds his beams have riven,
The storm-dispeller of the sky,
Beneath whose rays of splendour die
The rising mists of early morn
That veiled the earth when day was born.
The air grows warm and bright like spring,
And wild birds soar on joyous wing,

And the ocean, that but yesterday Was raging with its waves of spray In glorious madness, raves no more, But sobs in ripples on the shore.

And when the twain had sat some space Conversing, Edwyn with his face Grown grave and earnest, turned his head To the fair maiden's gaze and said. 'I go to-morrow, never more To visit this far distant shore Unless'—and here he took her hand In his; the gentle breezes fanned Her cheek, and yet it seemed to glow With greater warmth and redder grow-'Unless thou wishest. Constance dear.' 'I'm always glad when thou art here,' The maid replied: 'Ah! do not go For I—we all shall miss thee so.' 'And thou wilt miss me? Yes, a day Or month, perhaps, may pass away, . And thou wilt miss me less and less, For time soon brings forgetfulness.

And when you distant leafless glen
Blooms with young spring-time's buds again,
Will Edwyn's memory from thee pass
And fade like flowers among the grass.'
''Twill never fade,' the maiden said,
And modest, hung her drooping head.

'Oh! Constance, wilt thou be my own?

My own sweet darling cherished wife?

I care to live for thee alone,

Without thee life will not be life.'

He gazed with hungry eyes on her,
And yet the maiden did not stir,
Nor raise her downcast eyes, nor speak;
But the soft beauty of her cheek
Seemed somewhat paler than before,
And Edwyn thought her features wore
A startled look of pain, and he
Addressed her half reproachfully:
'I thought you loved me, Constance—Yes,
Fool that I was that could not guess
The truth. Forsooth, I am too poor

And must live on as best I can, And leave thee with a breaking heart To wed some other, richer man.'

She lifted up her glorious head; A flush of crimson overspread Her lovely face and cast a glow Like sunrise on her neck of snow; Her fair limbs trembled, and her breast Heaved like the ocean of the west In summer calm: her earnest eyes, As soft and blue as summer skies, Gazed back in his as if the whole Of her unselfish noble soul Beamed from those gold-fringed orbs of light, So pure, so innocently bright; And her soft fingers, white and fair, Pressed the strong hand that held them there, And like the sweet breath of the south Came thrilling from her lovely mouth Words that to him were heavenly life.

^{&#}x27;I love you-I will be your wife.

Oh! Edwyn dearest, what is wealth Compared with happiness and health? Only the meanest spirits wed For riches: love in such is dead. Can titled name, or lands, or gold, Bring joy to hearts where love is cold? Can any wealth as precious be As love in its first purity? To love, and be beloved again, Of all the joys to mortals given, Is far the greatest joy of all, A taste of future bliss in Heaven. Had I Arabia's richest stores, And all the wealth of Eastern shores. And countless pearls of matchless white, And wealthy mines of silver bright, And palaces of shining gold, And diamonds of price untold; I'd cast them all in yon blue sea To live in poverty with thee.'

He drew her nearer to his breast, And long with loving lips he pressed

Her cheeks with maiden blushes graced, And taking from his own he placed On her fair hand his jewelled ring That like the noonday sunbeam shone, Rivalled alone by her bright eyes That brightened all they looked upon. And then she told him all her heart That he had often longed to know. And owned with sweetly blushing face That she had loved him long ago; And long they sit while moments fly All swiftly and unheeded by. Theirs was a pure and holy love, Free from all sordid thought and care, The love that brightens Heaven above, And makes this world below more fair.

PART III.

Love's path is set with many a thorn And rugged as the road to Heaven, For never was there mortal born To whom unfought for has been given The bliss above he longs to know, Or joy within this world of woe: And never were true lovers yet Who have not with some hindrance met. For Satan ever hates to see True love in its first purity; He knows full well that such true love Draws human hearts to thoughts above, And so he soon some agent finds On earth among those hell-stained minds Made like his own, to do his will, Minds versed in every deed of ill,

That strive, and well know how, to part A loving heart from loving heart, And drive those hearts to mad despair, Till all that's noble, pure, and fair Fades from the soul, which turns to sin To kill the agony within.

Constance was graced with beauty rare,
And she was good as she was fair,
But her connections and her sire
Were such as no man would desire,
For few more worthless could have been:
Her sire was miserly and mean,
With nought to make him known to fame
Except a fallen sister's shame:
His flaxen hair was streaked with white,
His form was tall beyond the height
Of ordinary men;
And in his stern and cold grey eye
A heart devoid of sympathy
Was clear to simplest ken:

Was clear to simplest ken:
He would, whene'er he could, oppress
His tenants who might seek redress,

And seek and beg for it in vain; A man of small and shallow brain, More obstinate than most by far, Yet weak as such men ever are: In weakness bordering on a fool, His eldest daughter's ready tool, A feather blown upon the gale, Turned by her every word and tale To suit her own wild ways; and she Was eaten up by jealousy, Fierce jealousy that ne'er could brook Aught but admiring word and look: Forward, and frivolous, and vain, Each man she met she strove to gain, And all that dared her beauty slight Became the victims of her spite; She had her grandsire's evil heart, Well skilled in every guileful art, Having no sympathy or ruth, And utterly devoid of truth: He was a man to know and hate. A hoary-headed profligate; Polite and smooth before one's face. The specious words came with soft grace So smoothly from his oily lips
Like honey that the brown bee sips;
Far different he behind one's back—
Insinuations, slanders black,
And every kind of foul abuse
Of which a lying heart makes use,
Were used by him, whose acts of shame
Were widely talked of, and his name
A by-word in the mouths of men.

Such creatures guarded Constance, when The vessel that her lover bore Lay anchored off her native shore.

A week has passed, and hand in hand Along the shingly, wave-beat strand Among the rocks, those lovers twain Are walking side by side again; But sorrow sits on each one's face.

And when they reached the old loved place Where they had sat that happy morn, When new life in each heart was born, They sat them side by side again
Awhile in silence, for great pain
Weighed on their hearts—those hearts whose love
If all earth's power should strive to move
And crush, 'twould find itself too weak.

And Constance was the first to speak. 'They say I must not see thee more, That thou and I this day must part, And ruthlessly they bid me tear Thy darling image from my heart. I'm only happy when with thee, Whate'er misfortunes may betide; And what to me when thou art gone Is all the dreary world beside? They'll tell thee I've a fickle heart. And that I court the smiles of all, And listen to the words of love From whatsoever lips they fall. They'll strive to make thee love me less, And tell thee thou art quite forgot When thou and I are far apart; But 'twill be false; -- believe them not.' 'Believe them! No, by Heaven above; I were not worthy of thy love If I believed the idle tales That ready slander never fails To speak against unsullied truth And spotless love of maiden youth: I hate the hesitating way, Suggesting what it dare not say, The doubts and shadows of the past That jealous minds are ever prone. By hints and darkening words, to cast On spirits purer than their own. The sparkle of thy truthful eye Was never seen in heart of guile, Nor could the lips of wickedness . Dimple in such an honest smile. Cursèd be all that injure thee, My own sweet soul of purity; May they all waste and die forlorn Like flowerets on winter morn; May their companions ever be Disease, misfortune, misery; And may they meet their latter end In agony, without a friend

To cheer them on their bed of death,
Or listen to their parting breath.
And on that day when all shall rise
For punishment or Paradise
May they be'—' Hush!' the maiden cried,
And nestled closer to his side,

'Speak not so terribly Those awful words—Nay, look not so, My dearest one; I know, I know 'Tis all through love for me; But for my sake forget, forgive: Does anyone the happier live By cherishing revenge and hate And bringing ruin soon or late Even upon his bitter foe? This world contains enough of woe Without more ills. Oh! let us try To live with all men happily, And make those round us happy too By all that Christian love can do, And careworn hearts to sorrow less By sympathy and gentleness: The God whose ever-watchful eve Looks down upon us from on high,

Will guide us on the path of life; When He is with us, shall the strife That powers of darkness would awake Within our hearts have strength to shake Our faith and love? 'Tis He alone Can guide the outcast wandering one, 'Tis He alone can bend the will Of stubborn man from thoughts of ill; He can give life, and He can slay, Vengeance is His—He will repay; Trust in Him ever. He will bless Our lives with love and happiness; "Rest in the Lord." Those words thou knowest The song of all thou lovest best; And when away from me thou goest In those sweet words my soul shall rest. . May health, long life, and happiness, And honour unto thee be given, And blessings fall upon thine head Thick as the gentle dews of Heaven!'

'Twas thus she calmed with soft control The tempest of his stormy soul, And with her bright look drove away
The frown that on his forehead lay,
As the sun's smiling beams on high
Drive a dark storm-cloud from the sky.

He gazed upon her for a space With admiration in his face. Until a blush her face o'erspread: Then took her hand in his and said. 'Forgive me, sweet one, but my heart Is filled as with a maddening smart, And angry flames of fiercest ire Burn in my soul with hell's own fire, At thought that any fiend could be E'en fiend enough to injure thee. I know our foes, and know as well That jealousy is woman's hell, And cruel as the grave; Relentless, merciless in hate Alike against the weak and great, The timid and the brave. But, darling, come what may, I swear, If I must wait until my hair

Grow white with years, that I will wait For good or ill, and hear my fate From thine own lips and thine alone; And, darling, even if thy own Dear hand should write to me and say "I love thee not, and from this day All betwixt me and thee is past. And thou art from my memory cast," I'll not believe the words: each line Would make me doubly, trebly thine, For I should know what cruelty And persecution there must be To make my own one write like this. God grant that nought may mar our bliss! Let not the world's deceitful wiles. Its flattering speeches, treacherous smiles, Hypocrisy, and cunning art, Deceive your unsuspecting heart. Trust not the man who praises all, Nor him from whom but censures fall: There's falsehood in a shrinking eye That shuns truth's piercing scrutiny: While in a sidelong glance deceit And coward cunning ever meet:

That face betrays a heart of guile Which turns away to hide a smile At others' woe, or to conceal Its chagrin at another's weal: But far more dangerous than all Is he who, while his lips let fall Soft words, looks in your face and lies Unblushing, with bold-staring eyes, For such a man must certainly A systematic liar be, Without a conscience or a heart; Yet oft so well can play his part, Making his falsehood seem so true And others' truth so false, that few Who note his calm and honest air Would think there could be falsehood there; But watch for moments of surprise, When changing mouth and tell-tale eyes Will with a sudden look betray The heart, though that look pass away Swiftly as lightning which reveals The clouds of thunder night conceals, And warns us of the danger there.



And lastly of the man beware,
Who strives to worm by every art
The secrets from your inmost heart;
And talks religiously, and vows
Your cause for ever to espouse;
And yet drops hints as if he thought
There was the shadow of a doubt
That he you love is true; then sighs,
And gazes rudely in your eyes

With the bold stare of wickedness
That fain would force you to confess
Him irresistible—Beware—
He knows well how to set the snare
That oft succeeds where others fail.
Refuse to list to any tale
He tells; reject his sympathy,
His proffered help; know him to be
A villain, though he seem your friend,
One who to gain his selfish end
Would use the basest means. All these,
With flattering speeches framed to please,
Will hover round you day by day
And strive to steal your heart away.'

'None, none shall steal my heart from thee,'
Replied the maiden fervently.
'Would that I had my mother now
To press her lips upon my brow;
She was so good, so kind, so fair;
Her look was such as angels wear
When erring sinners are forgiven;
She would have loved thee as her son
If she had lived, but she is gone,—

You'll meet her some day, dear, in Heaven. Ah me! I miss those dear, kind eyes, And heart that loved to sympathise With every little wish of mine:
There is no other heart but thine
To love me now, and ere the sun
His downward course this day has run,
Thou wilt be far away at sea,
And I alone in misery
When thou art gone; for we must part
This day—but, darling, all my heart
Is thine and thine alone till death.'

Then in sad accents Edwyn saith,

'I know thou wilt be true to me

Through tales of slander, taunts, and shame,
And after lapse of absent years

That I shall find thee still the same;
But oh! 'tis sad indeed to part

From all we love the most on earth;
To feel one thrill of heavenly joy,

And lose it on its day of birth;
To wait through dark and dreary years,

Through years of agony and pain,

And never hear each other's voice, Or see each other's face again.'

'Those years will soon have passed away,' The maiden said, 'and we will prav For one another. God will move The hearts that hate thee till they love. And all their emnity forget. Oh! we shall both be happy yet; Yes, darling, we shall meet again, Though now in sadness we must part; I will be always true to thee, And trust thee from my inmost heart. The heart that once has truly loved, Can never from that love be moved: Love is eternal, and will grow Stronger beneath a weight of woe, And trials whatsoe'er they be; The food of love is misery, That drops from sorrow's weeping eyes, As rain that falls from April skies In stormy showers, the sweeter makes Spring flowers bloom when May awakes.

Do not despair, for who can tell The future? All will yet be well; Hope on, hope ever; love and trust, And look to Heaven, for Heaven is just, And will bring bliss to thee and me. I know, alas! that jealousy Is cruel as the grave, but love Is strong as death; and Heaven above Knoweth that all my heart is thine. And that thy heart is wholly mine: And though dark slander's busy tongue Shall strive to work my Edwyn wrong, Though lies, and cruelty, and hate Shall make my young life desolate, And strive from thee my heart to sever, I will be true to thee for ever.'

He bends his own face down to hers,
Her sweet lips to his own he presses,
While on his breast like sunshine falls
The gold of her dishevelled tresses.
Her red lips tremulous with love
Upon his own lips seemed to quiver;

Her fair face rested upon his,
As if 'twould linger there for ever.
One long last loving kiss—and then—
'God bless thee till we meet again.'

They parted thus: the maiden back Along the steep oft-trodden track Up to the ancient castle gate Turned her sad footsteps. Cruel fate Seemed hard to her; and when she came To the grim place, she sought the same High chamber whence with joy she spied Her lover's welcome vessel ride The white waves of the plunging sea Coming towards her home; but he Was gone, and she, with misty eyes, Sees his departing vessel rise Upon the slowly-heaving sea, Sailing away so lazily, As loth to leave that well-loved shore From which unwilling Edwyn tore Himself away; he takes his stand Upon the deck; he sees a hand

Waving farewell from up the height;
He sees those radiant locks of light
Around a pale sad-smiling face;
And mingled thoughts and feelings chase
Each other through his heavy heart
That aches with love-afflicted smart.

Slowly the vessel makes her way
Across the trackless sea; the day
Was on its downward path before
The outline of the dim grey shore
Had melted in the distant haze,
And disappeared from Edwyn's gaze.

Soon the broad shadowy wings of night Have put day's fading beams to flight; There is no moon, but many a star Enthroned in glory shines from far; Capella glitters bright and clear Far overhead; and twinkling near, Guarding the zenith of the sky, The demon of the blinking eye; And rising from the eastern wave, Like a white spectre from the grave,

Bright Sirius lends his level rav To guide the vessel on her way. And Vega ever twinkling bright. And gay Orion's belt of light. And the fair northern star that guides The sail or when his vessel rides Upon tempestuous seas, With all the starry hosts on high That travel through the pathless sky Round wintry Pleiades. And Edwyn, through the calm still night In meditation, watched the bright Soft stars that gemmed the unclouded sky. Those silent witnesses on high Of God's omnipotence. 'Oh! who Could look upon the pathless blue Of Heaven's expanse, and dare to say There is no God!—Will come the day When every creature born shall own That He is God, and He alone-The day when every knee shall bow Before the lightning of His brow? And will He, in His majesty, Have mercy on a worm like me,

And grant my heart's desire, and bless My earthly days with happiness?

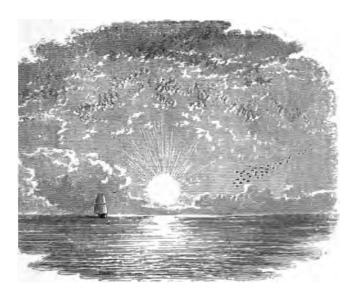
Oh! yes; for, by His mighty will,

He promises He will fulfil

The wish of those that trust in Him.'

Such were the thoughts that, in the dim Deep shadows of night's stillness, came Into his heart, in which the flame Of love is burning. Slowly creep The hours of night, for tardy sleep, Which careworn mortals ever prize, Comes slowly to his wakeful eyes, Which close not, till at noon of night Arcturus shows his lamp of light. Sleep comes at last; the stars' soft beams Fall on his face; hope's gentle dreams Pervade his soul; he sleeps till grey The dark horizon grows, and day Within the reddening east is born; The purple eyelids of the morn Open upon his waking eyes; Above, the white winged sea-gull flies,

Rousing him with her plaintive note; Enormous flocks of wild ducks float On the blue surface of the sea, Breathing the morning leisurely;



And as the vessel draweth near,
Filling the wary flock with fear,
They rise up with fast-flapping wings,
Whose sound along the water rings
Like when the gath'ring avalanche slides
Down snow-clad mountains' sloping sides.

A breeze uprises with the day,
Speeding the good ship on her way,
Whose helm in silence Edwyn guides;
And after two long days she rides
At anchor, near the yellow strand
Of his green-pastured native land.

PART IV.

Within a city's vast extent The fading beams of day are sent, And shadows dim of evening fall On smoky roof and gilded hall: While dusky grows the twilight shade In street and square and colonnade, And sounds of many pattering feet Re-echo down the well-paved street, And hard-worked horses poorly fed, With weary knee and drooping head That show the load of pain they feel, And eyes that look with mute appeal For one small spark of sympathy From hard unsympathising man, For whom they toil so patiently, And strive to do the best they can: And there are women wandering there With all the marks of sin's despair Fixed in their haggard eyes; Forlorn and wretched, doomed to roam Without a friend, without a home. Beneath their native skies: And men so fallen in sin and shame. Men truly in naught else but name: The father meets his child's caress With loathsome words of drunkenness; The husband greets his shrinking wife With foul abuse and lifted knife: And half-clad children catch the stain Of parents' sin, and learn to swear And take their Maker's name in vain In accents that pollute the air, While grey-haired parents smiling stand: And this is in a Christian land!

There, in the houses of the great The high and wealthy sit in state; There, bright and costly jewels deck Soft arm and alabaster neck, And breast as white as driven snow Heaves the rich satin robes below; There you may find the artful smile, The studied speech, the heart of guile, The smooth lies of society, And hollowness in all you see.

But who is this that sits all day Among his books with aching brain, And labours by the lamp's dim ray Until the morning breaks again? That form that oft in noble halls Had shone among the brightest there, Preferred to dwell within these walls. And live upon the coarsest fare; For there was some one far away For whom alone he cared to live. For whom he slaved by night and day, And gladly would his life-blood give To save her from a moment's pain, Or see her sweet face smile again. The dull months slowly pass away, Yet still he sits by night and day

Toiling with never-flagging zeal,
And hurries o'er each scanty meal
To make the most of precious hours,
And puts forth all his mental powers,
Till fortune smiles upon his name,
And bears it on the wings of fame.

But toil incessant, day by day,
Is wearing fast his health away,
For harassed mind and hard-worked brain
Will yield at last beneath the strain
Of thought, and care, and soul's distress,
And weary nights of sleeplessness.
So he must put his books away,
And cease from toil for many a day,
And seek mid varied scenes of life,
Where mirth and merriment are rife,
Repose from thoughts that rack the brain,
Until his strength return again.

PART V.

One autumn morn, when fields were white With hoar-frost, and the fire shone bright Within the room, at breakfast sat A group of friends, whose merry chat Beguiled the meal-time hour away; And all were light of heart and gay, Excepting one, whose face betrayed A soul that taming grief had made Thoughtful and all devoid of joy; Next to him sat a rosy boy Of six years old, with curly head, Who looked up in his face and said, 'Why do you always look so sad? For once your face was bright and glad, But now you never laugh at all: You used to romp and play at ball

With me, and used to let me ride Upon your back, and then you'd hide And pounce out from behind a tree, And shout and laugh. Ah! play with me This morning—yes, you will, I know— Dear Edwyn, I do love you so.' He nodded yes; the happy child Looked thanks from his bright eyes and smile And clapped his little hands with glee, Then said again concernedly, 'You are unhappy—tell me why; If I am so, I always cry, But I am happy soon again: You have been sad since that day when You came back from the sea, and now It is a year since then.' 'Oh! how You teaze him,' said a maiden there, With hazel eyes and nut-brown hair. While thus she spoke a servant brought A letter for him.—'Ah! I thought You'd have a letter soon,' said one. With laughing eyes and mouth of fun, 'From her you went to see the day You sailed and stayed so long away,

And would not tell the name or place. But something in his face I knew.' Checked further mirth; her laughing eyes No longer laughed. In mute surprise Sat Laura too, the dark-haired maid With hazel eyes, but nought they said. His face was white, he gasped for breath, Some dreadful news—perhaps the death Of some one near and dear to him. Before his eyes the words grew dim. Yet slowly through he read them all, While looks of pity on him fall, For he was well beloved by those Who sat around—they felt his woes As though they were their own. The gloom Of silence reigned within the room Until the meal was finished, when They rose to leave the room, and then With slowly paced and measured stride He walked round to the bright fireside. And tossed the letter in the fire With mingled looks of grief and ire, And followed. Laura stayed behind With gloomy bodings in her mind,

And watched the hateful letter burn All crumpled in the flame, and turn And fall still burning in the grate; And she, all curious, could not wait To see it quite consumed, but took It quickly from the flames, to look If haply any words remained; For she was grieved to see him pained, And would find out the cause; with eyes Of eagerness and strange surprise, With heart that longed to know, but feared, She read the few words that appeared— 'Most disappointed in you, for Before she had fancied you were'-more Could not be seen until the end. The fire had been the writer's friend. And both her name and words concealed: A postscript these few words revealed— · Please never mention it again In any way.' 'Twas all; and then With absent eyes, in thoughtful mood And heaving bosom, Laura stood, While mingled feelings went and came That made her hot cheeks burn like flame.



It quickly from the flames to look It haply any words remained."



'I've often thought, before to-day, He loved a maiden far away; He's often thinking-sometimes sighs-One day he said he loved blue eyes And golden hair; and then his heart Remains impervious to the art That maidens use: I've often seen Them gaze at him with glances keen From something more than friendship's eyes, Which seem to bring back memories Of bygone days of bliss to him, And make his earnest eyes grow dim. He loves then—yes, for when he took That letter up with wondering look And tore it open, gloom o'erspread His brow that clouded as he read; I noticed him, he gasped for breath, His quivering lips were pale as death, His strong limbs trembled like a leaf. I knew his soul was stunned with grief, And that 'twas grief which springs from love, For other grief can never move A noble soul as such grief can. Oh! how he loves her; shall a man

So true and constant waste his life In sorrow and sore-hearted strife, Unhappy victim of the wrong Wrought by a woman's lying tongue! But Heaven is just, and it may be That she who wrought this treachery To blast his life may pass her own An orphan, homeless, and alone. The maid he loves still loves him too: No one could ever be but true To him.—Yes, I will seek him now, And drive that sad look from his brow With words of comfort. I will tell The truth,—how when the letter fell Half burnt within the grate, I took The fragments up, and needs must look To see what words had grieved him so; He'll not be angry then, I know, He is too kind.'

And so she sought

The youth, and strove to drive each thought
Of sorrow from his heart of grief,
With soothing words that brought relief

To his sad thoughts, and seemed like balm Infusing a soft peaceful calm Into his soul for some short space, And driving from his careworn face Despair's wild look. But months roll by, Bringing back with them misery.

PART VI.

Three summers bright have passed away, And thrice the winds of autumn grev Have laid the leaves of summer low, And thrice has winter clothed with snow The naked beauty of the hills; And spring has come again that fills All nature with fresh loveliness: But spring brings no sweet blessedness To Edwyn all unhappy still; No word of comfort comes to fill His heart with joy, and sadder yet His face becomes with long regret. His soul was stung by many a word Of calumny; and hope deferred, That maketh sick the heart of man, Was shortening his little span,

And taking long years from his life:
The wearing of the spirit's strife
Was leaving traces on his brow;
His face was growing thin, and now
Sorrow had scattered here and there
White locks among his dark brown hair;
And people came with many a tale
That made his quivering lips grow pale
With anguish, and his heart nigh break,
That only lived for her sweet sake
Whose memory was the one loved light
That cheered his soul where all was night.

They told him many a time that she Was false and mocked his misery, And had betrayed each word he said To her, and that she wished him dead And ne'er to see his face again; And then, to add deep pain to pain, They said a handsome youth had come And woo'd and won her in her home, And was so nice, so dear to her.

Thus did they oft his worn heart stir,

And showed him many a letter too
To prove that what they said was true.
Thus weary day succeeded day
With thoughts of joy long passed away,
And night brought visions of the past,
Visions of bliss too sweet to last,
For sorrow came again with morn
To make the sad heart more forlorn.
So passed the long, long months away.

One sunny noon in early May
Did Edwyn wander forth alone,
As was his wont, to muse upon
His heavy grief; with footsteps slow
That heed but little where they go,
He came to a soft-murmuring stream
Shining like crystal in the gleam
Of sunrays that stooped down to kiss
Its purity, from realms of bliss:
Upon the sloping green banks grew
Forget-me-nots with flowerets blue,
That saw their own bright blossoms fair
Reflected in the brooklet there,

Whose winding waters flowed between The daisy-studded meadows green; And Edwyn paced along the bank While his sad soul the music drank Of its soft murmuring; and when He had wandered far, he reached a glen Thick with tall stately trees that spread Their leafy branches overhead. It was a calm secluded place Where seldom sight of human face Would break the solitude which reigned Within that place: and when he gained The still recesses of the wood In deep thought for a while he stood Among the thick-leaved forest trees That rustled round: the soft cool breeze Breathed gently on his throbbing head O'er which the leafy branches spread A shady quivering canopy Of green leaves that hung droopingly Above him. He being all alone Gave way to grief, and with a groan Flung himself down beneath the shade Upon the green turf overlaid

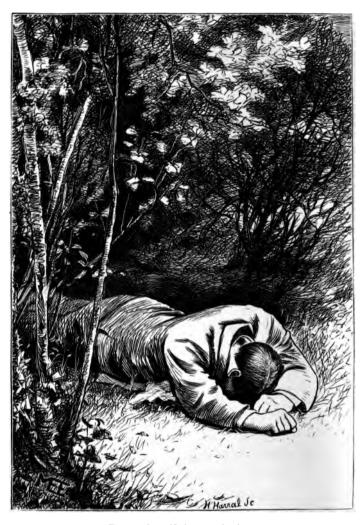
With wild flowers, children of sweet spring: Above, upon the branches sing Clear-throated warblers of the trees: He cares not for their song; the breeze Cools not the burning in his brain. 'Ah me!' he cries, 'is any pain So great as that which grinds the soul When years of weary anguish roll Over the lives of two that love. And ever vainly wandering move On opposite shores of the wide sea Of Time's dark waste of misery! My own sweet love, where art thou now? Methinks I hear thy mournful sighs: Methinks I see beneath thy brow Those large, blue, tearful, earnest eyes. Oh! would I were again with thee To hold thee once in fond embrace. Or only have thee near to see The old smile on thy darling face. The days are long without thy smile To bless me with its radiant light Through this long, long and weary while, And all within my soul is night.

Thou comest to me in my dreams, And then forgotten is my pain; I smile and all around me seems Like Heaven, till I wake again: But now they say that other eyes Smile unrebuked upon thy charms, And that thou breathest love's soft sighs All blissful in another's arms. And hast thou then forgotten me, My own, own love; my heart's fond pride? And wilt thou truly happy be When thou art made a rich man's bride? Perchance thou thinkest time will heal My heart, and calm my grief-worn soul; Ah no! my heart can never feel Again the bliss of love's control. All maidens are the same to me; Their glances only give me pain; I've given all my heart to thee, And could not-would not, love again. God bless thee, Constance—may'st thou be Happy! such is my prayer for thee; And when my worthless bones lie hid Beneath a gloomy coffin-lid,

Perchance those glorious eyes of thine May weep for this sad heart of mine, A heart that loved and lived for thee. And burst at last in agony. Oh! I have hoped, and prayed, and striven, And poured out all my soul to Heaven, While sleepless on my bed I lay, Until I felt too mad to pray. How gladly would I yield my breath— Oh, love, love, love, thou'rt strong as death! The bitterness of death were bliss Compared with years of life like this, Whose anguish lips are weak to tell. Oh God! Oh God! if ever hell Can cause such anguish to the soul As I have felt, then who shall dare To contemplate the endless roll Of agonising ages there!'

He started to his bended knee Clenching his hands in agony, And raised his burning, tearless eyes Of anguish to the cold blue skies,





"Then, with a stifled groan of pain, He flung himself to earth again."

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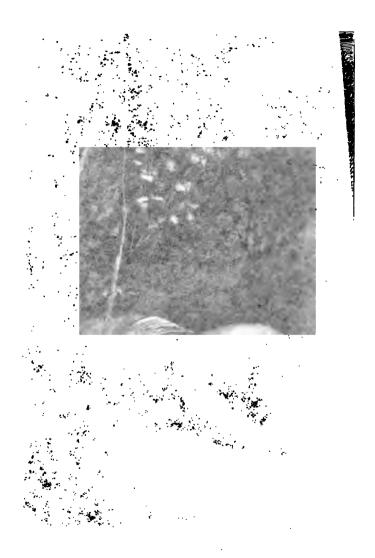
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In one long look of wild despair
That seemed to find no pity there:
Then with a stifled groan of pain
He flung himself to earth again
Writhing in agony of soul,
Fierce agony beyond control,
And murmured in his misery—
'Ah! no, no, no; it cannot be!
She is not false! Look on my woes,
Oh God! and judge 'twixt me and those
Who work this ill.'

Long Edwyn lay
Upon the green grass, until day
Was dying; then worn out with grief
He slept, and found some small relief
From sorrow. And the sun went down
Behind the western hill-tops brown.

Now all is hushed the woods among;
The birds have sung their even-song,
And one by one the stars on high
Come twinkling through the summer sky,
And cooling dews their softness shed
Round the unconscious sleeper's head.

But hark! what mean those shouts of fear That break on Edwyn's startled ear, And rouse him from his slumber soft?

A woman's shriek repeated oft,
And shouts of men, and children's screams,
While angrily to southward gleams
Across the sky a lurid light
That reddens all the summer night.

The sleeper started to his feet
And hurried on with footsteps fleet
Until he cleared the thick-leaved wood,
When lo! before his gaze there stood
A house in flames that reared on high
Their tongues of fury towards the sky;
While running wildly to and fro,
With busy hands and looks of woe,
Were human forms; and midst of these
With hair dishevelled by the breeze
A woman stood—her eyes upturned
Gazed wildly where the red flames burned
Within an upper room: and she
Looked at the flames despairingly,

And loudly screamed in terror wild 'Oh! save him—save my child, my child!'

Then quick as lightning Edwyn sprung
To where the thick-grown ivy clung
Against the house. And upward fast
He climbs, while those below aghast
Watch him ascend the dangerous height
Conspicuous in the glare of light.
The long white tongues of quivering flame
Burst forth to meet him as he came,
But boldly through their midst he leaps
To where the little infant sleeps.

Speechless, and rooted to the place,
The mother stood with upturned face,
And bloodless cheeks, and bated breath,
A living monument of death:
Her face looked awful in the glare,
All scattered hung her loosened hair;
Her parted lips were ghastly white,
Her trembling hands were clenched so tight
That each soft palm was stained with blood;
Her horror-stiffen'd eyeballs stood

Distended from her face of dread, And seemed nigh bursting from her head.

But see! From forth the fiery glare

He comes half scorched, with flaming hair,

And blackened face, and clothes all smoke—

A child within his arms. Then broke

A shout of joy from those below;

But still the mother's face of woe

Is fixed upon that blackened form

Descending through the fiery storm

Of ashes, sparks, and crackling flame,

Until with reeling steps he came

To where she stood; and when she found

Her darling babe was safe and sound,

Her voice broke forth in one loud yell,

And senseless to the ground she fell.

PART VII.

The scene is changed, and Edwyn stands Within his loved one's island home. With eager eyes and trembling hands Waiting for her he loves to come. He stands within the self-same tower Where she had sat for many an hour And gazed so often anxiously Across the wide wild-murmuring sea: There scarce remains one lingering trace Of bygone sorrow on his face; For joy is brightening on his brow That flushes all impatient now To meet her whom he has not met For such a long and weary while; His soul forgets all past regret, His features wear a sunny smile;

For there is sunshine in his heart, And while he stands with lips apart, The door is opened, and the twain Are in each other's arms again.

A crystal tear of love's delight Stood trembling on the tender bright Gold rays that fringed the blue-veined lid Which, gently drooping, partly hid. The glory of her heavenly eve Half closed in love's deep ecstasy. What moments those of perfect bliss! The earnest long impassioned kiss Of loving lips that have not met For weary years—bright eyes all wet With overflowing joy-soft arms, Secure at last from all alarms, Around his neck, while round her fold The dear strong loving arms of old; And heart is beating against heart In love's deep throbs, no more to part: Each other's now for ever. Yes, She his, he hers—what happiness!

Her eyes look lovingly in his That gaze back in excess of bliss; Her sweet face is no more forlorn. But bright and blushing like the morn In the glad sunshine of his eyes. 'My own, my darling one!' she sighs From the warm depth of her true heart. 'All mine, no more on earth to part. Ah! dearest, little canst thou guess The weary days of wretchedness, The long, long months of agony, That I have spent apart from thee. My sister's jealousy and hate Have done their worst to separate Our hearts and lives: with cruel art She prejudiced my father's heart Against thee long before the day That thou didst sail in grief away; She never breathed thy noble name Unless to couple it with shame. Where'er she went she wrought thee wrong With busy, mischief-making tongue Inventing stories which with care She scattered broadcast everywhere,

Knowing that soon my father's ear Her slanderous tales of thee would hear From other lips that know so well To make the worst of what they tell. The days have been so long and sad Without thee near to make me glad — I loved the night, for I could weep In silence until gentle sleep Came o'er me while I thought of thee, And then I slumbered peacefully, And saw thee near me in my dreams With face all beaming as it beams Upon me now; then I was glad Till morning broke and made me sad, For thou wert absent, and all day I wished the hours would pass away And welcome night return, for then I used to dream of thee again, And that was sweet, for well I knew That thou would'st be for ever true; And oh 'tis sweet to know one heart Is true; to feel no power or art Can ever from its purpose move Or change that noble constant love

Which all through sorrow, wrongs, and shame, Remains untainted still the same: And were I faithless unto thee Who art so true, I should not be A woman but a fiend, the worst That Heaven hath e'er in anger cursed; But oh! I love thee —yes, too well To strive in empty words to tell, For sweetest words are far too weak To tell thee all my tongue would speak. I feel as though my heart would break With joy; I feel that for thy sake I could give up my life, my soul; Ah! suffer torments through the whole Of hell's long dark eternity For one sweet day of joy with thee.'

He clasped her in his fond embrace, And then her bright and happy face Looked up so full of joy in his, While met their lips in one long kiss; And long in silence knee to knee With limbs that quivered tremblingly In love's excess, the lovers stood
Till the warm thrill of youthful blood
Flushed her fair face that sank to rest
Like evening's sun upon his breast,
All yielding to his soft caress
In mingled love and bashfulness.

The morrow comes, a glorious day
Of sunshine in the month of May.
The church is thronged with young and old
Who come to hear love's triumph told;
And Edwyn, clad in bridal guise,
With gladness beaming in his eyes,
Beside the altar takes his stand,
The golden circlet in his hand;
And joy lights up his face the while,
For walking up the centre aisle
He sees his Constance come,
A flower of youthful loveliness,
A star of beauty sent to bless
The fireside of his home.

The prayers are finished, the vows are said, And they who loved so long are wed, Joined together in one by Heaven,
With holy rites and blessing given.
Thus, after lingering years of pain,
They met at last in joy again;
As long-divided streams unite
In one great flood no more to sever,
And, clothed in twinkling smiles of light,
Flow on in calm repose for ever.

SLAIN IN THE BATTLE.

I

THE hostile armies stand in long array,
Gleaming with splendour in their arms of pride;
Each full of hate, each eager for the fray,

Their massive columns stretching far and wide; Brothers and friends are marching side by side;

Bright gleam the bristling bayonet and lance;
Gaily with nodding plumes the horsemen ride;
The neighing chargers champ their bits and

The neighing chargers champ their bits and prance,

Pawing the air; and hark! the bugle sounds Advance!

Behold with steady step, determined brow,

The youthful officer his broadsword wave,

Cheering his soldiers on to death; and now

The iron storm of death begins to rave,

Dismissing hundreds to an early grave,

And strews with death the red field all around:

And now a bullet strikes that bosom brave;

Low sinks the hero fainting on the ground,

And with his dying breath cheers on his men around.

3

The battle rages; sharp the rifles crack;

The cannon boom their thunder from afar;

The whirring shells leave a long smoky track,

Dealing destruction through the ranks of war;

Broadsword and bayonet, lance and scimitar,

Clash in wild discord, mingled with the yell

Of victors and of vanquished near and far;

Some in their madness cursing Heaven and Hell,

Some breathing prayers in death for those who

The friend I loved returned not from the fight,
And back I hurried to the battle-field.

It was the hour when crime-concealing night
To rosy morning's gentler touch should yield,
Disclosing sights were better left concealed.

With heavy heart I journeyed on my way,
For every step some ghastly sight revealed:

Comrades were lying stiff and lifeless clay,
Whose merry voices rang with mirth but yesterday.

5

I roamed with beating heart from place to place
Among the dead along the gory plain,
Examining each pale and lifeless face,
To see if he were there among the slain.
It was a sight I would not see again,
A sight of nameless agony and woe,
Enough to freeze the red blood in each vein,
And make the hardest heart with pity glow,
Yes, e'en the stony heart of Hell's grim lord below.

For there were bodies strewn about the plain;

The reddened stream with corses too was full;

As far as eye could reach, great heaps of slain

Looked awful in the morning cold and dull;

And here and there a battered gory skull,

Crushed almost flat beneath the chargers' tread,

The gaping mouth with clotted blood all full,

Hiding the features of the shapeless dead,

Whose stiffened eye-balls hang protruding from the head.

7

Here lies a youth; the red gash, deep and wide, Yawns in his breast as silently he dies; His arm of strength hangs powerless at his side; And while upon the blood-stained turf he lies, Insects creep over him, and loathsome flies Are buzzing on his pale face white as snow, And sucking moisture from those glazing eyes That looked with joy a few short hours ago On one now left alone in this sad world of woc.

And there, struck down by some stray cannon-bal With shattered leg the faithful charger lies,

The large red drops of blood ooze out and fall

As fall the thunder-showers from southern skies

His great side heaves with coming death's thic sighs,

The poor dumb animal lies down to die, Looking for pity with forgiving eyes; But men pass heedless on and let him lie Gasping his life away in lone mute agony.

9

I found a shapeless mass that made me groan; 'Twas once a man—a blood-stained uniform Covered the mangled flesh and splintered bone, And on this mass, still quivering and warm, There hung an arm of strong and shapely form Grasping a sword; upon the finger shone The well-known ring.—'Twas he. Then burst storm

Of anguish in my heart, for he was gone,
The noblest man that Heaven had ever beame
upon.





Yes, he was noble; on his manly brow

No sinful thought or care had left a trace,
But virtue's beauty shone, is shining now,
In happy radiance on that truthful face,
So frank, so courteous, with its noble grace
Expressive of a soul that looks on high
For Heaven's guidance during life's brief space,
And the deep lustre of that earnest eye
Beamed with the stedfast light of heaven-born
purity.

ΙI

His was the warmest and the truest heart

That ever beat within the breast of man,

Free from all thought of sin and guileful art,

Stedfast in that true faith which erst began

When oft-times as a little child he ran

Unto a loving mother's knee to crave

God's love, that he might be a virtuous man,

Truthful and noble, generous and brave,

An angel sent on earth some erring soul to save.

But those whom Heaven loves die young, and he
Departed early to the land of rest,
With all the bloom of youthful purity
Upon his brow. Truly the dead are blest,
And they alone; the sorrow-stricken breast
Remains for the survivor in whose brain
Linger sad thoughts that bring the soul unrest,
And make life seem of little worth and vain
Compared with death, sweet death, that brings an
end to pain.

13

The friend I loved was dead, and I must go,
My heart o'erwhelmed with weight of misery,
And gently break the cruel tale of woe
Unto his widowed mother. I can see
Her now—her calm, despairing agony;
Her fixed, dry eyes, too sorrowful to weep,
That seemed to gaze into eternity,
As with a plaintive sigh so sad and deep,
She whispered soft, 'He giveth His beloved sleep.'

Soon sorrow's hoary footsteps turned to snow

The summer brightness of her rich brown hair,

And stamped upon her forehead lines of woe;

And her soft cheeks, so rounded once and fair

As roses, now like faded lilies were;

And darker grew the tell-tale marks of grief

Beneath her haggard eyes grown dull with care:

She drooped and faded, but her pain was brief,

For soon the sleep of death brought her sad soul relief.

15

Such power hath grief; but others too there were
Whose grief was great as hers, for cruel fate
Had frowned on aged sires and maidens fair,
And made their homes forlorn and desolate;
And the lone woman at her cottage gate,
Whose husband had gone forth at dawn to fight,
Stands watching for his coming, long and late;
But his glad smile comes not to cheer her sight,
And she lies down to weep throughout the livelong night.

And many homes are filled with lasting gloom,
And many hearts are broken, bright eyes wet.
Weeping in wild distraction at the tomb
Of some dear one they never can forget;
For them life's joyous sun has rudely set
For ever in affliction's troubled sea
Of tears and sadness and of vain regret,
Whose ever-rolling waves of misery
Wear out the souls of men however brave they be.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.



ONE winter evening when the sun was low, I walked along the windy, frost-bound street: The pavement whitened with fast-falling snow That froze upon my feet.

Young men and boys were running, snowy white,
And tott'ring old men shivering with cold;
While weirdly through the deepening dusk of night
The sound of dull wheels rolled.

3

Ice-flakes were forming upon whip and rein,

The drivers' whitening beards began to freeze;

And slipping horses struggling on in vain

Were falling on their knees.

4

I saw, as homewards I walked on alone,
A porch where, 'neath the door-lamp's feeble ray,
Barefooted on the frozen step's cold stone
A pale-faced woman lay.

5

Beneath her scanty garments worn and old,

The weary heart had almost ceased to beat;

Her hands were blue and stiff, benumbed with cold;

The snow flakes kissed her feet.

I brushed from off her face the cruel snow,

And raised her gently from the chilling stone,

And bade her come with me: I could not go,

And leave her there alone.

7

I took her to my home, and bade her rest;
And gave her food, for she was famished:
The warm life kindled in her heaving breast,
Whence it had well-nigh fled.

8

I watched reviving life within her rise,

And then began in gentle tones to speak:

She looked up in my face with grateful eyes,

While tears rolled down her cheek.

9

And I besought her to relate to me

The story of her life, for I would know

What evil fortune had been hers. Then she,

'It is a tale of woe,

'But I will tell thee all, for thou didst come
A guardian angel unto me when I,
Starving and destitute, without a home,
Had laid me down to die.

ΙI

'I was a lady born, and when a child
Of five, my mother died; her gentle grace
Won people's hearts; her eyes were soft and mild;
She had an angel's face.

12

'And when she died, I wished that I were dead,
And would not speak throughout the livelong day,
But wept, and wept, and when I lay in bed
I sobbed the night away.

13

'Years slowly passed, until at last there came
One whom I saw and loved, from o'er the sea;
The very mention of his darling name
Was nourishment to me.

'He was so generous, warm-hearted, true,
Brave, gentle, everything a man should be;
I worshipped him—he was not rich, I knew—
But what was that to me!

15

'Whene'er he spoke, Oh! I remember well

How with great bounds my heart within me leapt,

And when he said he loved me, then I fell

Into his arms and wept

16

'Tears of delight: he kissed away each tear.

Oh! how I thrilled with joy in his embrace;

What bliss it was to have my own lips near

The sunshine of his face.

17

"This very morning," said he, "will I see
Thy father, and will tell him of our love,
And ask his blessing; happy shall we be
As angels are above."

'My father with cold rudeness bade him go,
Wronged and insulted him beyond belief.
I saw the man I loved depart in woe,
His eyes were wild with grief.



19

'I stood upon the green hill's sloping side,
And watched him, through a mist of tears, depart:
He went away for ever—yes—he died—
A bullet pierced his heart

While he was fighting with his country's foes
 Among his comrades on a foreign soil;

 He smiled at death, for death brought sweet repose
 And rest from sorrow's toil.

2 I

'Yet I lived on, but would that I had died!

My sufferings none but those who feel can tell:

I met with insults upon every side,

My home was made a hell.

22

'Alas! how many worldly parents use

The fifth commandment as a cloak for sin;

And in their narrowness of soul abuse

The words expressed therein;

23

'Breaking their children's hearts by tyranny, And never with their feelings sympathise, But sell their souls for gold, or high degree, Like common merchandise.

'My father had a wealthy friend, who came
To ask my hand—yes, such was then his whim;
His ill-bred coarseness made me hot with shame,
And I detested him.

25

'A drunkard, profligate, well-skilled in lies,
Harsh and ill-tempered at the best of times;
But then he'd gold, and gold in worldly eyes
Covers so many crimes.

26

'My father forced me to become his bride,
Not satisfied with having wrecked my life;
I stood before God's altar and I lied,
And we were man and wife.

. 27

'I loathed the thought that I should be embraced By him, and have his arms around me thrown; A sickening came upon me when he placed His face against my own.

'When I had been his wife a weary year,
A little child one night to me was born;
The angels would not let him linger here—
He died before the morn.

29

'While I lay weak, my cruel husband came,
And said with cold calm voice that we must part,
Casting false imputations on my name
That crushed my broken heart.

30

'He went away from home that very day;
Ill as I was, he did not reck or care;
And left me in his house—I would not stay
Another moment there.

3 I

'I rose from off my bed, and wandered forth
To seek my father and my childhood's home.
Full in my face blew fiercely from the north
The snow's white drifting foam.

'But still I laboured onward, for I said

"Surely my father will be grieved to see

My wasted form and face white like the dead,

And will be kind to me."

33

'At last I reached my toilsome journey's end,
And came unto my old home, worn and sore;
My father sided with his wealthy friend,
And spurned me from the door.

34

'Then heedless where my trembling footsteps strayed,

I wandered on again in mad despair,

And from my broken heart's wild depths I prayed

To die, I cared not where.'

35

She ceased, worn out and weary—I withdrew,
Bidding her strive to sleep, and rest from pain,
And when the evening into night-time grew,
I came to her again.

She lay quite motionless; and when I saw
Her pale still face, and helpless-hanging head,
And cold dull stiffening eyes, and fallen jaw—
I knew that she was dead.

IN DEATH THEY WERE NOT DIVIDED.

I

Two soldiers were sharp'ning their maiden swords
On the balmy eve of a summer day;
For war was declared, and the trumpet's blast
Was calling them forth to the field away.

2

They had loved each other as little ones,
And love had strengthened with boyhood's years;
They had lived together, and worked and played,
And shared each other's pleasures and tears.

3

Wilfrid the younger was still but a boy,
'Twas cruel to send one so young to die;
And as Arthur gazed on his youthful face,
A tear-drop stood in his manly eye.

But Wilfrid perceived his thoughts and said,
'Let us not grieve, for all must die;
And what is nobler than dying in arms
For the land we love, mid the battle-cry?

5

'Yes, thou and I will fight side by side,
And if both of us fall on the battle-plain,
'Twill be but the merciful will of God,
For we shall the sooner meet again.'

6

The fight has begun, and the ranks of men Are falling beneath the storm of lead, And the gory hoofs of maddened steeds Are trampling down the dying and dead.

7

A bayonet's point was at Wilfrid's breast,
And soon had his red blood flowed on the plain,
But Arthur's sword came whistling down,
And the head of the foe was cleft in twain.

A pistol was aimed at Arthur's side,
But Wilfrid rushed forward with sudden start,
And making his body a shield for his friend,
Received the pistol-shot in his heart.

9

Then Arthur was maddened with grief and rage, 'And slashed at the foe with might and main,.

Till, weakened by wounds, he staggered and fell.

On a heap of the dead that his sword had slain.

10

And close by his side lay his dearest friend,
With a round blue spot on his snow-white breast,
Where the ruthless bullet had entered in,
And sent the soul to its long, long rest.

ΙI

Eyes have been wet, and hearts have been sad
Since the day when Arthur and Wilfrid died,
And now they are sleeping under the turf
In a quiet churchyard, side by side.

OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.



I

Down on her bended knee, Looking to Heaven, Sweet child of purity, Only just seven.

Blue eyes of loveliness
Lifted in prayer,
Tear-drops of earnestness
Glistening there.

3

Tiny young fingers
Clasped in devotion,
Mouth on which lingers
Trembling emotion.

4

Tresses like sunny gleams

Down her back flowing,

Health's rosy morning beams

On her cheek glowing.

5

She was an orphan lone
Tossed on life's wave;
All that she loved were gone,
Gone to the grave.

See her lips parting,
Parting to pray;
Warm tears are starting—
What doth she say?

7

'Do not forsake me, Great God of love; Take me, Oh! take me With Thee above.

8

'I am so sad now, Nowhere to rest; Would that I had now One loving breast:

9

'Where lying dreaming,
Free from all care,
Loving eyes beaming
Through sunny hair

'Tenderly over me
Ever should smile,
And gentle arms cover me
Softly the while.

11

'I am a lonely child,
None to caress me;
Oh! God of mercy mild,
Look down and bless me.

12

'Oh! I beseech Thee,
Show me Thy way;
Help me, and teach me—
Teach me to pray.'

13

Then in her childish ear
Breathed a soft voice,
'Little one, do not fear,
Sing and rejoice.

'In God the All-giver
Thou shalt find rest;
Trust in Him ever,
Thou shalt be blest.'

THE OLD STORY.

I

HE stood beside the garden gate
Where softly breathed the summer breeze,
And gazed with wistful eyes along
The shady avenue of trees.

2

When soon a light and fairy form
With hastening steps towards him moved,
And soon within his manly arms
He clasped the maiden that he loved.

3

For he was going far away,

And came to take a last farewell,

For two long weary years or more,

Of Marian whom he loved so well.

Her long hair fluttered on his arm,
And oft she vowed by Heaven above
That neither time, nor wealth, nor aught
Of earthly power should change her love.

5

She flung her arms around his neck
And pressed her lips against his cheek,
And printed burning kisses there
With lips that needed not to speak.

6

She cut a tress of silken hair

For him to wear against his heart,

And tears came welling from her eyes

When it was time for them to part.

7

And long they sat beneath the shade
Of spreading trees that strove to hide
Those lovers twain from stranger eyes,
As they sat happy side by side.

But they must part;—just one more kiss— One more long, loving, fond embrace— And Henry tears himself away, And Marian hides her weeping face.

9

He wanders far in distant lands,
And toils for her with all his might,
And thinks of her all through the day,
And prays for her at morn and night.

10

And after two long years of toil,

He comes back o'er the stormy tide
With beaming face and joyful heart,

To make the girl he loves his bride.

ΙI

He sees his native village church;
Within his breast his glad heart swells:
He stays beside the old church porch—
But hark! What mean those bridal bells?

		,	



"The flower he cherished in his routh, is blooming in another's arms."

Perchance some happy village youth

Is standing at a maiden's side

Within that pretty rustic church,

And soon will lead her forth his bride.

13

The church door opens; forth they come; 'Tis Marian in her bridal wreath; She has become another's bride, And Henry's face is pale as death.

14

He turns away with breaking heart,
And eyes with drops of sadness dim;
For she was more than all the world,
Yes, more than life itself, to him.

15

But life is nothing to him now;

The world for him has no more charms:

The flower he cherished in his youth

Is blooming in another's arms.

And Henry's face grew stern and grave,
Marked with deep lines of mental pain;
That face that always looked so bright
Was never seen to smile again.

BEHOLD IT WAS A DREAM.



METHOUGHT I lay upon a mountain slope, Watching the sun's bright orb of flame descend Behind the ridges of the western hills, Till all grew dusk, and sleep-compelling night Spread her soft wings of darkness o'er the scene; And as I mused upon life's vanities,

There stood before me in the moonlight dim A glorious being from another world With brow of beauty and majestic mien, Who thus addressed me as I gazed in awe Upon the brightness of his countenance:-'Thy thoughts are of the vanities of life, The world's devices and the deeds of men; Rise, follow me, and I will show thee all The ways and follies of this world of sin: Each house shall seem to thee as though unroofed. And thou shalt see through roof and floor and wall, Which shall appear to thy astonished eyes Like glass transparent, showing all beyond.' He ceased and waved his hand, when lo! appeared A car of crystal into which he stept, And bade me follow: wond'ring I obeyed. We rose from earth, and swiftly through the night Pursued our course, till resting in mid-air Above the cottage of a husbandman, We gazed upon its rooms exposed to view. A child of three with rosy dimpled cheeks And laughing mouth sat on her father's knee, And looked up in his honest sunburnt face That gazed back joyously upon the child:

His wife was rocking softly off to sleep Her last-born little one; her happy eyes Turned oft with loving looks upon the twain. It was a peaceful home: within its walls Contentment dwelt and reverence for God.

Then onward moved again the crystal car Across the grassy slopes and fields of corn, And rested o'er an ancient castled house Built among trees, the growth of many years, Which clothed the green brow of a sunny hill That sloped down towards the ever-sighing sea. There I beheld a maiden whose white hand Was clasped by an old man of seventy years, Handsome in face, with drooping beard of snow. Then turning to me, thus my guide began :-'That aged man thou seest sitting there, Is ably versed in subtlety and sin: He wedded oft, was faithless to each wife; From his youth up a fop, effeminate, And ruiner of all that's fair and pure In virtuous woman's trusting, simple soul: In early days he won the honest hearts Of two fair maidens, and preferred the one

Of nobler family and greater wealth,
And left the other with a broken heart
To pine her life away in misery;
Then by a hair's breadth only, he escaped
The righteous vengeance of a brother's wrath:
That maiden whose white hand he holds in his,
Unto the man who loves her is betrothed,
But that white-bearded, smooth-tongued reprobate
Hath slandered his fair spotless name to her,
And now is striving with his honeyed words
To steal her young affections to himself,
And make her promise to elope with him,
A spendthrift slanderer and profligate.

He ceased, and onward through the moonlit night, Swifter than thought, we travelled towards the south, Until a mighty city we beheld.

And first I cast my wonder-stricken eyes
Upon a noble house, wherein I saw
A stately dame conversing with a man
Of boorish look, and thus I heard her speak:—
'Thy entertainment shall be grand, superb;
Persons of highest rank, and gentle blood
Shall come to grace the splendour of thy halls;

But only those must come that I approve,
And all that hitherto have been thy friends
Must be discarded; thou must cast aside
And know them not.' To her replied the boor:—
'It is my wish to know the nobly born,
To move among the first society,
And walk abroad, a lord on either arm;
My former friends I willingly discard;
They helped me once, 'tis true, but now I need
Their help no longer, so I cast them off.'

Within the selfsame house, I next observed
One of the gentle sex of doubtful years
Arrayed in fashion's latest finery,
In all the glory of her ball costume—
The padded dress, the tightly-fastened waist,
The skilfully-enamelled face that shone
Beneath the purchased glory of her hair,
The deftly-pencilled eyebrows arching o'er
Her lustrous belladonna-brightened eyes,
Whose lower lids, fresh from artistic brush,
Were still all wet: alone within her room
Before her mirror long she smiling stands
With self-admiring gaze, rehearsing all

The various poses, all the studied looks
That she hath practised oft to captivate
The hearts of men: the frank and open stare
That gazes with a child's simplicity,
And then the stately, half-reproachful look
That follows when a man returns her gaze;
And then the bashful, half-averted glance,
Which seems to say, 'I meant not to reproach;'
And then the half-bent head and drooping lids
That partly hide her eyes which melt with love,
And in their silent language say far more
Than twenty tongues of earnest eloquence.

And there were many houses bared to view.

In one a woman with a cunning face,
Abstracting letters from another's desk
And reading them intently one by one:
In one a student poring o'er his book:
In one a child upon his bended knees
Lisping to God the prayer his mother taught:
In one I saw a youth, cigar in mouth,
Writing a letter full of tenderness
And loving words to one he called his own;
But scarcely was the letter finished, ere
He wrote another in the self-same words

Unto another whom he called his own.

And then I saw a school all hushed to rest,

Where many sleeping boyish faces shone
In the soft beauty of the silver moon.

And then a woman watching by a bed

Of sickness, where the dim, half-darkened lamp,

Cast melancholy gloom, foretelling death.



And in a chamber near to this I saw A little bed in which two children lay

In peaceful slumber; on each cherub face Dwelt an expression of sweet purity, The purity of childhood's innocence.

Then moved the crystal car a little space. When breaking silence thus my guide began:-'Behold, within that house beneath us now, A man whose head is resting on his hand; He loved a maiden, one whom he had known From childhood's early days, and she had grown Into his very soul: his love for her Was chaste as angel's love; pure as the dew Of morning in the rosebud of the spring That gives its sweetness to the rising sun: She was the joyous sunshine of his heart. The one bright guardian angel of his soul, For whom he would have yielded up his life; But when she budded into womanhood. The time when love is born and yearns to rest In some fond heart, there came, as ever come To break fond hearts, designing, cruel tongues, And parted her from him, and so her love Was smothered at the birth before it grew. And he lost all that made life sweet to live.

Now he is far away from all he loves; He sits alone; life has no joys for him; His once strong limbs are wasting, and his face Is marked with lines of utter misery; The fire of life has faded from his eyes Which gaze in vacant sadness at the walls: The night-time brings no pleasant dreams to him; His night is one of restless heaviness, Nor cometh joy again with morning's light; No smile e'er plays upon his silent lips That once were merry as the voice of spring; The holy book he once had loved to read Is cast aside, unopened, hated now; For all its sweetest promises, wherein His soul had found repose and happiness. Seem but to mock him; he hath ceased to pray, And all the sweet calm purity of thought That raised his soul to pure unselfishness, That raised it far above all jealousy, That raised it up to virtue and to Heaven, Is passing from him, never to return.'

We moved again a little space, and now Beneath us was a madhouse; there I saw Men, women, children. 'Tis an awful thing To look on human beings like ourselves Created in God's image, thus diseased; The light of reason quenched within the brain, To see the vacant wildly-staring eye, The more than childish helplessness; to hear The meaningless strange words, the jarring laugh That fills the mind with pity and with awe: Yet these I saw and heard; and there was one Who sat aloof with sorrow on her brow. A girl of nineteen summers; burning tears Rolled slowly down her faded sunken cheeks, As groaning in her sorrow thus she prayed:— 'Oh God! forgive my father for this crime, For I first sinned in disobeying him; Yes, he forbade me e'er to walk abroad Alone, but I—I heeded not his words; Then he declared me mad to disobey, And placed me here in this most fearful place Among the mad; and when I tell my tale To those who come to see the inmates here, I see them melt with pity at my woe-They pity me because they think me mad.'

When I beheld this sad, heartrending sight, And knew that I was powerless to help, I felt a fainting sickness at the heart Such as a lover feels when all love's hopes Are buried in the unforgotten past. But onward moved again the crystal car, Bringing fresh sights of woe beneath my gaze. Within a dwelling of the poorer class A half-starved woman, cold and thinly clad, Is sitting pale and haggard; not a taste Of food has passed her lips the livelong day; Hard hath she toiled, poor soul, from early dawn Until the fall of night to earn a meal, Not for herself, she cared not for herself, But for her husband—where and what was he? An idle vagabond that never worked, But lived upon the earnings of his wife; A drunkard, a blasphemer, and a thief: And he remained at home till she returned. Then took her earnings from her with an oath. Leaving the house for some low drinking-haunt: And she, his wife, is sitting patiently Starved and half-clad upon a broken chair,

The only furniture that now remains Within that bleak, bare room, all carpetless, For all had long been sold to purchase drink. But see! he has returned—her worthless spouse, An empty bottle in his shaking hand; His eyes are flashing with delirious light, And cursing loudly at his trembling wife, He shakes her, and demands in rising wrath More money; she, with meek, imploring eyes, Tells him she hath none—he hath taken all; She hath no more to give: but with an oath The drunken scoundrel takes her by the throat, And with the bottle in his other hand Strikes her all helpless a terrific blow Upon her snow-white temples; back she falls, The red stream gushing from her mangled head Which droops among the splinterings of glass; With her last dying look of mute appeal She speaks forgiveness from her meek blue eyes, But he replies with blasphemy and oaths, And stamps her skull in with his iron heel. Yet he lives on, for this is English soil, Where little heed is paid to woman's wrongs.

We moved away from this sad scene of woe And hovered o'er a noble well-built bridge That crossed the silent river's sleeping depths: One solitary form was standing there, A woman in the humbler class of life. And she was pale and sadly beautiful: And as the moon peeped from a passing cloud Shedding its silver softness on her face, I saw upon that sad pale face a look Of miserable, terrible despair; And then I heard her voice, so wildly sad:-'Oh God in Heaven! forgive this last wild act, For I am mad; I can no longer bear This great despair, this miserable grief; Shunned by my sex, a base polluted wretch. Lost to eternal happiness and heaven. Oh mother darling! I deserve it all; Thou hast disowned me, thrust me from thy door, But it was just, for I deserve it all; Oh! would that I might see thy face once more, And feel once more upon my throbbing brow Those lips that kissed me in the days gone by, Those happy days of childhood's innocence: But I must never see thee more, for thou

Wilt be with angels in the far off heaven, But I shall not be there.'

She ceased: and then

I saw her stand upon the parapet,
A monument of madness gazing forth
Into despair's black depth of misery;
'Twas but a moment, and she flung herself
Down headlong in the darkness; then a splash,
A bubbling of the waters down below,
And all was silence, save the piteous whine
Of the one creature that had followed her,



A faithful dog, that long with upward eyes
Gazed at the place from whence his mistress leapt,
And would not leave the spot, for he was true
To her he loved—yes, faithful unto death;
But then he was a dog!

Again the car

Moved onward o'er the city's vast expanse;
Then I beheld fresh scenes of sin, and woe,
And poverty, and hunger, and despair;
Till filled with horror I addressed my guide:—
'How long shall these things be? Hath Heaven
no power

To save the innocent from suffering, And punish crime? Or are these things unknown To the Almighty, that He heedeth not?'

Then he, in words that awed me, thus replied:—
'Think'st thou that aught of this escapes the eye
Of the Creator of the Universe,
Almighty searcher of the hearts of men?
Nay, there is nothing which is hid from Him;
But He is merciful, long-suffering,
He loves the sinner though He hates the sin,
And waiteth long for sinners to repent;
And though the wicked prosper for a time,
Living in affluence and slothful ease,
Even to three score years and ten of sin,
And though the innocent may suffer long,
Enduring hardships, e'en from birth to grave,

The time will come of endless life or death,
Of joy eternal or eternal woe;
And what is man's short life on earth compared
With all Eternity's un-numbered years!
For soon or late the dreaded day will come
That no man knoweth, when the Lord of Hosts
Shall come to judge the world.'

While yet he spake I heard a sound like thunder in the sky,
And saw a blaze of light athwart the heavens;
And I beheld the myriad forms below
With faces terror-stricken: then my limbs
Trembled with fear; I started, strove to speak,
And—I awoke; and lo! it was a dream.

THE CLOWN.



UPON the stage-boards once, a merry clown,
With jesting voice and many a strange grimace,
Made hundreds shake with laughter; every face
Was mirthful; the morose forgot to frown,

And children clapped their little hands with glee,

Till tears of laughter made their bright eyes

swim,

Longing that they too might be clowns like him And live their lives away as happily.

But was he happy? No; he knew his wife
Was lying ill and starving in her bed,
While he must jest and laugh to earn his bread,
To keep starvation off and save her life.

E'en while the jest is on his lips, his heart
Is bursting with its heavy weight of pain;
He knows not if he e'er shall view again
That one loved form, or see those dear lips part

In smiles of welcome that would ever greet

His coming when his hard day's work was done,

When arduous toil and price of labour won

Made sabbaths with his loved one doubly sweet.

And now his thoughts are of the days gone by,
Of vows of love, and earnest beaming eyes,
And soft brown hair, and as he thinks he sighs;
But he must jest, and hide his agony.

Yes, he must jest until the curtain falls;
And then a shade comes o'er his pallid brow,
There is no laughter on his sad face now;
He hurries homeward to dim-lighted walls.



And there fast sinking, on her lowly bed,
With short convulsive gasps his loved one lies,
She smiles love's last farewell with dying eyes,
And he sits broken-hearted with the dead.

On life's wide stage are often minds of worth,
And hearts nigh breaking with excess of grief,
And agony almost beyond belief,
Beneath the mask of heartless-seeming mirth.

ALONE.

OH! place me afar on some desolate shore

Where the world and its troubles can reach me no more;

Where the white-rolling waves of the fathomless deep

With their music of sadness may lull me to sleep.

I have lived, I have loved; known sorrow and joy Since the days when I longed as a light-hearted boy

For the summer of manhood, and then would I fain Have recalled the sweet springtime of boyhood again.

Through the desert of life I must wander alone,
For the friends of my youth and companions have
gone;

They have gone to the grave where I soon shall find rest

Beneath the green turf, with the ones I loved best.

There is sorrow for man from the earliest years

That he spends in this world's gloomy valley of
tears,

Till the oft-welcome day when he yields up his breath

In the arms of the grief-calming Angel of Death.

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